

# Lambda Letters Project

32615

Vol. 7, No. 11 November, 1999

[www.lambdaletters.org](http://www.lambdaletters.org)

LambdaLP@aol.com

(916) 965-6851

## Annual LLP Meeting in January

Lavender Library, Archives  
and Cultural Exchange  
Sacramento, CA

Next year's annual membership meeting of the Lambda Letters Project is scheduled to take place in Sacramento on Saturday, January 22, 2000. The agenda will include a report on the accomplishments of the Project in 1999, approval of the 2000 budget (see proposed budget in Table I on page 10), the election of new board members, and other business that may properly come before the meeting.

*Please plan to attend our annual meeting in January. Help us make Lambda Letters a representative democracy!*

Do you wish to run for a seat on the Board of Directors of Lambda Letters? If so, please send your name, phone number, and a brief biography explaining why you want to join the board. We will publish your candidacy in the next Lambda Letters newsletter. Please submit your information by December 15th.

If you are unable to attend, *please complete and return the proxy statement* enclosed with this newsletter. This is very important because unless we have a quorum of one-third of the members present, in person or by proxy, we cannot accomplish the important business of the meeting.

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### Gubernatorial Analysis

## A Time for Euphoria?

by Boyce Hinman,  
Lambda Letters Project Administrator

This year Governor Davis signed AB 1001, a bill that bans sexual orientation-based discrimination in employment and housing. He also signed legislation to establish a statewide domestic partner registry and allow state and local governments to offer domestic partner benefits to their employees. Another bill signed by the governor bans discrimination against queer youth in public schools. These are all very important bills and we should be sure to thank the governor and the legislators who introduced those bills. For that reason, Lambda Letters used its e-mail alert system to ask people to call and thank the governor. Many people on the list have done so.

Many people have been euphoric over the passage of these bills. They are certainly landmarks in the struggle to gain full recognition of the rights of queer folk. However, a careful examination of this year's legislative record suggests that much more was left undone and some very important legislation was purposely blocked by our elected officials.

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## Lambda Letters Progress Report

### Messages Collected

September, 1999	23,602 letters & e-mails
In all of 1999	185,824 letters & e-mails

### Dollars Spent

September, 1999	\$1,040
In all of 1999	\$15,276

### Can You Help?

Please support the very important work of the Lambda Letters Project with your contributions.

# Lambda Letters Project

## Mission Statement

To promote people of color, feminist, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and HIV/AIDS status advocacy, and to bring people of color, women, lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgendered persons, and persons affected by or living with HIV/AIDS into full participation in the mainstream of American society now, exercising all the privileges and responsibilities thereof.

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Vice-Chair: Lori Norman, Los Angeles, (310) 390-5095, [bettyboop\\_1930@hotmail.com](mailto:bettyboop_1930@hotmail.com)  
Recorder: Lynn Dobbs, San Diego, (619) 275-5343, [partners@access1.net](mailto:partners@access1.net)  
Treasurer: Michael Butler, Antelope, (916) 722-6301, [mbutler@gvn.net](mailto:mbutler@gvn.net)  
Alan Beach Nelson, San Francisco, (415) 431-5152, [alanrhs@aol.com](mailto:alanrhs@aol.com)  
Larry Beaty, Carmichael, (916) 965-6851, [lambdalp@aol.com](mailto:lambdalp@aol.com)  
Ray Leber, Sacramento, (916) 925-5368  
Ken Kohler, Modesto, (209) 529-3368, [kenauthor@aol.com](mailto:kenauthor@aol.com)  
Morris Lyons, San Leandro, (510) 895-6437, [bikerone@yahoo.com](mailto:bikerone@yahoo.com)

## Staff

Administrator: Boyce Hinman, (916) 965-6851, [lambdalp@aol.com](mailto:lambdalp@aol.com)  
Newsletter Editor: Stefan Grünwedel, (650) 655-3154, [s-t-e-f-a-n@rocketmail.com](mailto:s-t-e-f-a-n@rocketmail.com)  
Legislative Analyst, Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender Issues: Christopher Calhoun, (323) 860-7352, [ccalhoun@laglc.org](mailto:ccalhoun@laglc.org)  
Legislative Analyst, HIV/AIDS Status Issues: Carolyn Race, Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Center, (323) 860-7361, [crace@laglc.org](mailto:crace@laglc.org)  
Legislative Analyst, People of Color Issues: Marty Martinez, (415) 255-9191, [mmar10ez@aol.com](mailto:mmar10ez@aol.com)  
Legislative Analysts, Women's Issues:  
Adrienne Lauby & Martha Courtot ([cronewit@aol.com](mailto:cronewit@aol.com))  
Database Manager: Charles Penn, (916) 663-4951, [cpenn@foothill.net](mailto:cpenn@foothill.net)  
Webmaster: Lynn Dobbs, San Diego (619) 275-5343, [webmaster@lambdaletters.org](mailto:webmaster@lambdaletters.org)  
E-mail Alert Advocate, Federal AIDS Issues: Joe Heller, (520) 762-9787, [jrheller@dakotacom.net](mailto:jrheller@dakotacom.net)

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The Lambda Letters Project does not sell or loan its mailing list to anyone. We give no information about who is, or is not, a member of the Project. We do, occasionally, send mailings on behalf of other worthwhile organizations, but this is done by our own volunteers so that no other organization has the opportunity to copy our mailing lists.

The Lambda Letters Newsletter is published monthly except in December by Lambda Letters Project Inc., 6212 Silverton Way, Carmichael, CA 95608.

Postmaster: send address changes to the address above.

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# Making the Equity in Education Act Real

by Christopher Calhoun

Some laws are the culmination of long struggle; others mark the beginning. Some like AB 537, the Student Safety and Violence Prevention Act of 2000, are both.

More than any other LGBT civil rights victory this year, the passage of AB 537 is a contingent one—ultimately its success or failure depends not on the Legislature's votes and the Governor's signature, but on years of follow-up work at the state and local levels to make schools safe for LGBT students.

According to Assemblymember Sheila Kuehl (D-Encino), the driving force in the legislature behind the five-year effort to protect students from sexual orientation-related harassment, "Now that we have strong protections in the law against discrimination and harassment of students on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity, the next step is making sure that students know their rights and schools are aware of their obligations."

What kind of tool is AB 537? What will it do for students and schools? And how can we help support its full implementation across the state?

The answers to these questions are open. California's Equity in Education Act, the law amended by AB 537, is relatively untested in certain respects, because most of the bases covered by it are also covered by federal laws which provide more powerful and clearer remedies. Nonetheless, the law has potentially enormous impact in the area of sexual orientation-related harassment and discrimination, because all California schools will, for the first time, have a legal requirement to protect all students from discrimination and harassment on the basis of their sexual orientation.

How will the process work? That, too, is uncertain, because the Department of Education is currently revising its Uniform Complaint Procedure. Essentially, the law provides students whose schools fail to protect them appropriately with a higher authority—the California Department of Education. If a school fails to protect a student from discrimination or harassment, the student or parent may make a complaint to the Department of

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# Fate of HIV/AIDS Bills

by Carolynn Race

Assemblymembers Mazzoni and Migden deserve a round of applause. This session has been a busy one for Sacramento legislators and HIV-advocates. They worked to support such legislation as AB 103 (Migden), which would have implemented a non-names based HIV reporting system for the state; AB 155 (Migden), which will expand Medi-Cal coverage to people with disabilities (including people with HIV) who enter/re-enter the workforce; and AB 136 (Mazzoni), which would exempt public entities with needle-exchange programs from retribution, if such entities declare a local state of emergency.

The hard work paid off—for the most part. Governor Davis has acted on these bills, signing both AB 136 and 155 but vetoing AB 103. His signatures of the first two will bring forth progress for the health and welfare of all Californians, removing barriers to entry into the workforce and exchanging needles. In his veto message of AB 103, Governor Davis discussed his willingness to implement a non-names based HIV reporting system. He said, "The State Department of Health Services is pursuing a grant from the federal Centers for Disease Control to fully fund the costs of an HIV unique confidential identifier surveillance system. If California receives such funds, I will take steps to immediately implement such a system."

Assemblymembers Carole Migden (D-San Francisco), author of AB 103 and 155, and Assemblymember Kerry Mazzoni (D-San Rafael), author of AB 136, and their staffs deserve a round of applause for their tireless efforts on behalf of those living with (and at-risk of contracting) HIV. Please write them and thank them for all of their hard work.

MELINDA M. WHITEWAY  
Attorney and Counselor at Law

## Whiteway Law Offices

1966 Tice Valley Boulevard  
Suite 241  
Walnut Creek, CA 94595  
Phone: 925-932-5333  
E-mail: [MelindaMW@aol.com](mailto:MelindaMW@aol.com)  
<http://firms.findlaw.com/melindamw/>

# Supporting Food Stamps for Legal Immigrants

by Boyce Hinman

On Thanksgiving Day many of us will stuff ourselves to the bursting point at the dinner table. So it is appropriate that we support an upcoming bill to reduce hunger among legal immigrants in this country.

Senators Edward Kennedy (D-MA) and Arlen Specter (R-PA) will soon introduce the Hunger Relief Act of 1999 that fully restores food stamp eligibility to all immigrants affected by the 1996 welfare reform law. This bill would address the widespread hunger plaguing millions of children and adults in this nation.

The bill would target Food Stamp Program improvements to ensure more adequate nutrition assistance for at-risk groups, especially needy legal immigrants and low-income households with children, including working families and families with children with high shelter costs. It also would provide greater resources through The Emergency Food Assistance Program for those families and children turning to food pantries and other emergency feeding sites.

Recent studies confirm that, despite a strong economy, hunger is common in this country. A July, 1999 Government Accounting Office study concludes, "Children's participation in the Food Stamp Program has dropped more sharply than the number of children living in poverty." The USDA has determined that 6.1 million adults and 3.3 million children lived in households which experienced hunger during 1998, and hunger rates are highest in households with children led by single women and minorities. Up to 33 percent of former welfare recipients skip or cut meals to make ends meet.

This Kennedy-Specter bill takes several steps in address the problem. First, it restores food stamp eligibility to all eligible legal immigrants—many of whom are working, though at low wages.

Second, the bill updates food stamp rules to allow recipients to own a car so that they can get to work. Previous limits on the allowable value of such a car meant that recipients really couldn't own a car.

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# Stopping Religious-Based Pregnancy Centers

by Adrienne Lauby and Martha Courtot

Some years ago the Christian Right created a network of pregnancy centers as an alternative to Planned Parenthood. Pregnant women who seek help at these clinics are never given information about abortion.

Now a small coalition of legislators has introduced a bill to help fund these centers to the tune of \$85 million.

This is HR 2901, the Women's and Children's Resources Act, whose chief sponsor, Representative Joseph R. Pitts (R-PA), states that this bill "could bring pro-life and pro-choice together to offer real solutions to women." What is more likely is that the bill will limit both women's access to information as well as abortion.

According to Pitts, money would only be given to organizations that "have a stated policy of actively promoting childbirth instead of abortion." To receive funds the group must be "physically and financially separate from any entity that advocates, performs, counsels, or refers" to abortion services.

Despite how people feel about abortion, it is a legal medical procedure in this country—one option among a complex range of fertility and child-bearing issues. HR 2901 excludes Planned Parenthood and other clinics that have pioneered family planning and that offer a range of services to pregnant women. Instead it funds organizations that limit legal medical information to women who must make a series of life-changing decisions.

Tell your Representative to nip this particular anti-abortion effort in its early stages.

**Don't Know Who Represents You?**

Send your request with a stamped, self-addressed envelope and we'll send you a complete list of your elected officials. Or go to [www.lambdaletters.org](http://www.lambdaletters.org) to find out who represents you.

# November Legislative Update

The following is a list of bills supported by the Lambda Letters Project this year. The stated status of each bill is as of October 11th, the day after the deadline for Governor Davis to sign or veto any bills sent to him.

The governor did quite well by us on LGBT bills. However, he vetoed—or otherwise engineered the defeat of—some important AIDS bills, as well as some bills that were of particular importance to the women's and people-of-color communities.

Note that the status lines of some bills say they are "two-year" bills. This means that they were not approved by the Legislature prior to the September 10th deadline and the bills' authors have been given permission to bring them up again next year.

## *HIV/AIDS Issues*

### **AB 16 (Mike Honda, D-San Jose)**

**Purpose:** Under current law state and counties split the costs of providing publicly funded in-home supportive services for aged blind and disabled persons. However, if the counties or the agencies they contract with to provide the services grant a pay raise to the workers providing the care, the counties must foot the whole cost of the raise. This bill changes the law to say that even these raises will be funded equally by the state and the counties. The budget just passed allows the state to pay 50 cents of any raise. The author is still pushing this bill to get the state to pay 50 percent.

**Status:** Passed by the Assembly. Stuck in the Senate. A two-year bill.

**LLP Position:** Support.

### **AB 103 (Carole Migden, D-San Francisco)**

**Purpose:** To require the State Department of Health Services to implement a unique identifier system in order to conduct HIV surveillance and improve data collection while maximizing confidentiality protections.

**Status:** Vetoed by the governor.

**LLP Position:** Support

### **AB 136 (Carole Migden, D-San Francisco)**

**Purpose:** As amended in early September at the request of Assemblymember Kerry Mazzoni, it relieves counties and their agents or employees from criminal prosecution for establishing and implementing a clean needle and syringe exchange program. This bill is a substitute for AB 518, which was withdrawn under pressure from the governor.

**Status:** Signed by the governor.

**LLP Position:** Support.

### **AB 142 (Kevin Shelley, D-San Francisco)**

**Purpose:** To require that every healthcare service plan provide medical care in accordance with accepted medical practices and provide emergency healthcare services, and also to ensure confidentiality of the medical information of an enrollee. Plans must provide access to a wide variety of primary healthcare providers and specialty healthcare providers to ensure that the enrollee is able to choose a qualified doctor or other healthcare provider.

**Status:** Approved by the Assembly. Stuck in the Senate. A two-year bill.

**LLP Position:** Support.

### **AB 155 (Carole Migden, D-San Francisco)**

**Purpose:** To allow people with AIDS who return to work—but whose income is below 250 percent of the federal poverty standard—to continue to receive Medi-Cal benefits.

**Status:** Signed by the governor.

**LLP Position:** Support.

### **AB 217 (Scott Wildman, D-Glendale)**

**Purpose:** Language about requiring Medi-Cal healthcare providers to add new drugs to their HIV/AIDS drug formularies has been removed from the bill. AB 217 does require Medi-Cal providers to inform their HIV-positive patients of the steps, if any, that have been taken to refer them to physicians with



VICKI PFINGST

9978 FOLSOM BLVD.  
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(916) 362-1166  
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## November Legislative Update

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substantial experience in treating AIDS. It also requires the state to pay Medi-Cal providers enough for caring for HIV-positive patients, in order to enable those providers to attract the services of physicians qualified to treat HIV/AIDS.

**Status:** Vetoed by the governor.

**LLP Position:** Support.

### AB 518 (Kerry Mazzoni, D-San Rafael)

**Purpose:** To permit local jurisdictions to establish legal clean needle and syringe exchange programs in California to reduce the spread of AIDS and other diseases spread by the shared use of needles.

**Status:** Passed by the Legislature and sent to the governor for signature. Withdrawn by the bill's author when the governor threatened to veto it.

**LLP Position:** Support.

### AB 851 (Fred Keeley, D-Santa Cruz)

**Purpose:** To expand the AIDS prevention education requirement in grades 7–12 to include instruction in prevention of sexually transmitted diseases and to require related instructional materials to be medically accurate and free of race, gender, and ethnic bias.

**Status:** Vetoed by the governor.

**LLP Positions:** Support.

### AB 1047 (Marco Firebaugh, D-Huntington Park)

**Purpose:** To require that the state make new AIDS medications—provided under the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP)—available to patients within 30 days of being notified that the drugs have been approved by the FDA for the treatment of AIDS.

**Status:** Signed by the governor.

**LLP Position:** Support.

### SB 77 (Kevin Murray, D-Los Angeles)

**Purpose:** Existing law says that a worker's family may apply for a worker's compensation death benefit when he or she dies from a job-related accident or illness. The claim must be submitted within a specified time from the onset of the job-related illness or accident. A longer time is allowed in deaths from asbestosis because of the typically longer time from exposure to asbestos and death from asbestosis. SB 77 says that HIV and AIDS have a similarly long period of development and so should have a similarly long time during

which a claim for a worker's compensation death benefit may be claimed.

**Status:** Signed by the governor.

**LLP Position:** Support.

### SB 1258 (Richard Polanco, D-Los Angeles)

**Purpose:** To require California to solicit approval from the federal government for California to provide Medi-Cal coverage to individuals who are HIV-positive, but who do not have AIDS. Current federal regulations limit the provision of Medi-Cal to people who have AIDS or who are otherwise disabled.

**Status:** Passed by the Senate. Stuck in the Assembly. A two-year bill.

**LLP Position:** Support.

## *Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgendered Issues*

### AB 26 (Carole Migden, D-San Francisco)

**Purpose:** To define "domestic partners" and provide for the registration of domestic partnerships with the secretary of state. The bill would also specify procedures for the termination of domestic partnerships. The bill had also required group health care insurance plans that offer coverage of employees and their spouses to also offer coverage to employees and their domestic partners. This feature was dropped at the insistence of Governor Davis.

**Status:** Signed by the governor.

**LLP Position:** Support.

### AB 107 (Wally Knox, D-Los Angeles)

**Purpose:** To authorize the state and local governments to provide health care benefits to the domestic partners of their employees.

**Status:** Passed by the Assembly. Stuck in the Senate. A two-year bill.

**LLP Position:** Support.

### AB 208 (Wally Knox, D-Los Angeles)

**Purpose:** To provide that the penalty for a defendant who is found guilty of murder in the first degree is imprisonment in state prison for life without the possibility of parole if the victim was intentionally killed because of the victim's disability, gender, or sexual orientation—or because of the defendant's perception of the victim's disability, gender, or sexual orientation—and this allegation has been found to be true.

**Status:** Signed by the governor.

**LLP Position:** Support.

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## November Legislative Update

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### AB 222 (Sheila Kuehl, D-Santa Monica)

**Purpose:** Called the Dignity for All Students Act. Would amend the California Education Code to add "sexual orientation" to those sections that now protect students from other forms of discrimination. It would specifically bar sexual orientation discrimination in public education, including student programs and activities, athletics, curricula, employment, and financial aid.

**Status:** Failed by one vote on the Assembly floor. Replaced by AB 537 (see below).

**LLP Position:** Support.

### AB 537 (Dion Aroner, D-Berkeley)

**Purpose:** Bans sexual orientation-based discrimination against students in public schools. Is intended to make schools crack down on violence against queer youth.

**Status:** Signed by the governor.

**LLP Position:** Support.

### AB 1001 (Antonio Villaraigosa, D-Los Angeles)

**Purpose:** To amend the California Fair Employment and Housing Act to prohibit employment and housing discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

**Status:** Signed by the governor.

**LLP Position:** Support

### SB 75 (Kevin Murray, D-Los Angeles)

**Purpose:** To enact the Domestic Partnership Act of 1999, which would define "domestic partners" and provide for the registration of domestic partnerships with the secretary of state. The bill would also specify procedures for the termination of domestic partnerships.

**Status:** Vetoed by the governor.

**LLP Position:** Support.

### SB 118 (Tom Hayden, D-Los Angeles)

**Purpose:** To require employers to grant family and medical leave to employees who need to care for their domestic partners.

**Status:** Passed by the Senate and sent to the Assembly. Passed all necessary Assembly committees. Was held back under pressure from Governor Davis. A two-year bill.

**LLP Position:** Support.

## People of Color Issues

### AB 63 (Denise Moreno Ducheny, D-National City)

**Purpose:** To create an Office of Border Health, which would act to increase cooperation between Mexican and California/US health authorities in tracking disease, monitoring the health of persons along the border region, and would convene a task force of community stakeholders to help develop a strategic plan to address the health concerns in the border region.

**Status:** Signed by the governor.

### SB 44 (Richard Polanco, D-Los Angeles)

**Purpose:** To affirm that the laws of California, including the restrictions on affirmative action, do not prevent governmental agencies from engaging in focused outreach and recruitment of minority groups and women if any group is underrepresented in entry level positions or in an educational institution.

**Status:** Vetoed by the governor.

**LLP Position:** Support.

### SB 66 (Kevin Murray, D-Culver City)

**Purpose:** Existing law requires the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training develop and disseminate training for police officers, including instruction on racial and cultural diversity, in order to foster mutual respect and cooperation between law enforcement and members of all racial and cultural groups. This bill additionally would require the commission to develop guidelines that California law enforcement agencies would be required to adopt for the purpose of establishing race neutral criminal profiles.

**Status:** Passed by the Senate. Stuck in the Assembly. A two-year bill.

**LLP Position:** Support.

**Deborah A. Brooks**

Certified Public Accountant



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## November Legislative Update

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### SB 73 (Kevin Murray, D-Culver City)

**Purpose:** Would allow the state to establish programs and goals for state contracting with small businesses.

**Status:** Vetoed by the governor.

**LLP Position:** Support.

### SB 78 (Kevin Murray, D-Culver City)

**Purpose:** Existing law requires the Department of Justice to issue an annual report containing the criminal statistics of the preceding calendar year. This bill would require this annual report to contain information about the race, ethnicity, approximate age, and gender of the people stopped in traffic stops.

**Status:** Vetoed by the governor.

**LLP Position:** Support.

### SB 82 (John Vasconcellos, D-San Jose)

**Purpose:** To provide that any alien who is otherwise eligible for Medi-Cal services, but who does not meet specified requirements relating to residency status (undocumented alien), is eligible for medically necessary pregnancy-related services.

**Status:** Many of the features of this bill were amended into AB 1107, an appropriations bill for the Department of Fish and Game. That bill was signed by the governor and the author then dropped SB 82.

**LLP Position:** Support.

### SB 613 (Hilda Solis, D-El Monte)

**Purpose:** To make permanent the Office of Multicultural Health within the California Department of Health Services.

**Status:** Vetoed by the governor.

**LLP Position:** Support

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## Women's Issues

### AB 39 (Robert Hertzberg, D-Van Nuys)

**Purpose:** To require individual and group health care service plans to cover the cost of FDA-approved prescription contraceptives.

**Status:** Signed by the governor.

**LLP Position:** Support.

### AB 40 (Howard Wayne, D-San Diego)

**Purpose:** To establish the Breast Cancer Treatment Program for purposes of providing breast cancer treatment services to uninsured and underinsured women with incomes at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Also to require the State Department of Health Services to administer the program only when the Legislature has appropriated funds for the program.

**Status:** Passed by the Assembly. Stuck in the Senate. A two-year bill.

**LLP Position:** Support.

### AB 398 (Carole Migden, D-San Francisco)

**Purpose:** To authorize the sale of bonds to provide funds for government-backed affordable housing.

**Status:** Stuck in the Senate. A two-year bill.

**LLP Position:** Support.

### AB 633 (Darrell Steinberg, D-Sacramento)

**Purpose:** Would hold retailers and manufacturers liable for contractors who pay employees less than minimum wage and refuse overtime benefits. It also extends the right of individual workers to sue for back wages and penalties if the administrative process fails to resolve the situation.

**Status:** Signed by the governor.

**LLP Position:** Support.

### SB 41 (Jackie Speier, D-Daly City)

**Purpose:** To require disability insurance providers that cover prescription medications to include FDA-approved prescription contraceptives in their list of covered medications.

**Status:** Signed by the governor.

**LLP Position:** Support.

### SB 56 (Hilda Solis, D-El Monte)

**Purpose:** To prohibit employers from punishing employees who take time off to testify in court in domestic

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## November Legislative Update

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abuse cases, as long as employees give reasonable notice to the employer, prior to taking time off, that he or she is required to appear in court to obtain or attempt to obtain any relief to help ensure the health, safety, or welfare of a domestic violence victim or his or her child.

**Status:** Signed by the governor.

**LLP Position:** Support.

### SB 193 (Joe Baca, D-San Bernardino)

**Purpose:** Existing law provides for the Breast Cancer Research Account in the Breast Cancer Fund. Ninety percent of the moneys in the Breast Cancer Research Account is allocated to the Breast Cancer Research Program created at the University of California. This bill would require the State Department of Health Services to offer for sale breast cancer license plates to be sold at a price determined by the department, with the proceeds to be deposited into the Breast Cancer Research Account in the Breast Cancer Fund.

**Status:** Was passed by the Senate and sent to the

Assembly. Approved by the Assembly Transportation Committee and sent to the Assembly Appropriations Committee. Was blocked by Assemblymember Carole Migden because a bill in the Senate on Girl Scouts was not moving in that house.

**LLP Position:** Support.

### SB 1154 (Jackie Speier, D-Daly City)

**Purpose:** To enact the California Breast and Gynecological Cancer Treatment Program, administered by the Managed Risk Medical Insurance Board, to provide treatment services to low-income, underinsured women.

**Status:** Passed the Senate and its Assembly policy committee. Stuck in the Assembly Appropriations Committee. A two-year bill.

**LLP Position:** Support



the news resource of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community

# OUTWORD

## newsmagazine

The staff and management of Outword Newsmagazine fully supports the work and goals of Lambda Letters Project and offers its profound gratitude to the volunteers and staff for making those goals a reality.

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(916) 329-9280 • Fax 498-8445 • Email [news@outword.com](mailto:news@outword.com) • Website [www.outword.com](http://www.outword.com)

*This newsletter printed on recycled paper*

## A Time for Euphoria?

Continued from page 1

For example, look at Table II below. As you can see, only 39 percent of the bills supported by Lambda Letters actually became law. LGBT issues was the only subject area in which the percentage of bills signed into law exceeded 50 percent. When I went to school, 65 percent was considered the lowest possible passing grade.

**Table II. Outcome of Bills Supported by Lambda Letters**

(See Legislative Update for bill descriptions)

Bill Type	Total Bills	Sent to Gov.	Signed by Gov.	% of All Bills
All	33	22(*)	13	39%
HIV/AIDS	11	8	4	36%
LGBT	7	5	4	57%
People of Color	7	5	1	14%
Women's	8	4	4	50%

(\*) 67% of all bills supported by Lambda Letters in 1999 were sent to the Governor

I have been critical of elected officials and particularly of Democratic officeholders. Given Governor Davis's signature on several important LGBT bills, I had been considering eating humble pie in this newsletter and acknowledging that the Democratic-controlled legislature, and the governor, had done a good job. That was before I reviewed the data in Table II and before I heard of the governor's veto of some crucial HIV/AIDS bills.

Governor Davis forced the Legislature to remove a crucial needle-exchange bill from his desk (AB 518). He vetoed a bill to use a non-names-based system for tracking HIV (AB 103). He also vetoed a bill requiring Medi-Cal providers to give better treatment to HIV-positive patients (AB 217). He even vetoed a bill requiring that students in grades 7-12 be given medically accurate education on the avoidance of sexually transmitted diseases.

I hate to sound negative all the time, and we have made some marvelous advances this year. However, there is still much reason to press elected officials of all parties to do more.

*Lavender  
Valentines*

Boyce Hinman &  
Larry Beaty  
~ 29 years ~

Justine Wright &  
Isabel Perez  
~ 3 years ~

Jackie Mahone-Tyson &  
Karen Mahone-Smith  
~ 10 years ~

## Annual Meeting

Continued from page 1

### Who Qualifies to Vote at the Annual Meeting?

Anyone who is a "member in good standing" at the time of the annual meeting may vote at the meeting. According to guidelines adopted by the board of directors, a member in good standing is anyone who has submitted an application for membership and has returned one or more signed letters to Lambda Letters

during September, October, or November, 1999.

Almost anyone receiving this newsletter qualifies to vote at our annual meeting. We hope you will attend and help make Lambda Letters a member-run organization.

Please remember, we

need attendance of one-third of our members present, in person or by proxy, to conduct business. So please complete and return your proxy immediately. Please note: you will be able to vote at the meeting even if you send us your proxy but then decide to attend the meeting after all.

The annual membership meeting will be held at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral at 2620 Capitol Ave. in Sacramento. It begins at 9:30 AM with coffee and donuts. The business meeting begins at 10 AM.

**Table I. Proposed LLP Budget for 2000**

Income	Amount (\$)
Ad Space	1,800
Contributions	13,000
Member Dues	5,400
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>20,200</b>
Expenses	Amount (\$)
Advertising	50
Computers	450
Fees	2165
Insurance	2,026
Misc.	180
Photocopies	4,026
Postage	3,075
Printing	386
Supplies	952
Telephone	480
Travel	2,344
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$16,134</b>

# Domestic Partner Registration: The Process

by Boyce Hinman

This year the state legislature passed landmark legislation (AB 26 by Carole Migden, D-San Francisco) to establish a statewide domestic partner registry and allow state and local governments to offer domestic partner health benefits to their employees. Here is a preliminary look at the process resulting from this legislation.

AB 26 mandates that the California Secretary of State establish a state-wide domestic partner registry. Same-gender couples, and opposite-gender couples who are senior citizens, will be allowed to register their domestic partnerships with the Secretary of State's offices in Sacramento or in its regional offices around the state. A source at the Secretary of State's office says they hope to be ready to do this on January 1st.

Below are the addresses and phone numbers of the Secretary of State's offices. We suggest you call the office before going there to be sure they are ready to process your registration.

1500 11th Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(916) 653-7244

2497 West Shaw Avenue, Suite 101  
Fresno, CA 93711  
(559) 243-2100

300 South Spring Street, Room 12513  
Los Angeles, CA 90013-1233  
(213) 897-3062

1350 Front Street, Suite 2060  
San Diego, CA 92101  
(619) 525-4113

455 Golden Gate Avenue, Suite 7300  
San Francisco, CA 94102  
(415) 557-7047

It will also be possible to register a domestic partnership with the County Clerk's office. At this point

we have no way of knowing when the counties will be ready to accept such registrations. We suggest you call your County Clerk's office for details. They should be listed in the government section at the front of your phone book.

So what are the benefits of registering your partnership? AB 26 says that domestic partners must be given hospital visitation rights when their partner is hospitalized, unless such visits would cause significant harm to the health of the patient. Occasionally parents of siblings have prevented such hospital visitations. Now they will not be allowed to do so.

Growing numbers of private employers are offering domestic partner health insurance to their employees. This allows employees to add their partners to the employer-provided health insurance plan. Many employers who offer the coverage have required that employees register with local government in locations where these governments have established domestic partner registries. Now those employers will probably require the employees to register their domestic partnerships with the Secretary of State's office or with the County Clerk's office, as provided by AB 26. State and local governments that offer domestic partner benefits will also require such registration.

Governor Davis signed AB 26. He also voted for domestic partner benefits for employees of the University of California when the UC Regents voted on that issue. It is therefore expected that the state will offer domestic partner benefits to its employees. (University of California employees are in a separate system than other state employees. They got domestic partner benefits about a year ago.)

Domestic partner benefits cannot be given to state employees who are represented by unions unless their union contracts call for such benefits. A source from the California State Employees Association says that all CSEA contracts already contain the necessary wording. So it is expected that domestic partner benefits will become available to their members (including retired CSEA members) early next year. No doubt these employees and retired persons will be required to register their domestic partnerships prior to applying for the health benefits.

State employees represented by other unions should check with their unions about getting the benefits. Local government employees and retired persons should also check with their unions or personnel offices.

# Is Cynicism Justified?

The media frequently describe Americans as cynical about government. Many people apparently say, "Why bother voting or contacting elected officials? Nothing we do will change anything."

However, the last two years have shown that queer activism can make a difference. In 1998, California banned hate crimes against transgendered folk (AB 1999). In 1999 California banned discrimination against lesbian, gay, and bisexual persons (AB 1001) and banned discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered students in public schools (AB 537). This year the state also established a statewide domestic partner registry and allowed state and local governments to offer domestic partner benefits to their employees (AB 26).

Our enemies fought very hard to defeat these measures, but we fought back and we won.

In 1998 Lambda Letters delivered over 48,000 letters and messages on LGBT issues to our elected officials. So far in 1999 we have delivered over 94,000 letters and messages. These efforts, plus the growing effectiveness of other queer lobbying organizations, probably have a lot to do with our community's increasing success. Organizing and lobbying does make a difference and we urge you to continue and increase your support of such efforts.

## People of Color Issue

*Continued from page 4*

Third, the bill helps low-income families (with children) with high housing costs. It does this by allowing households to deduct higher shelter costs than had previously been allowed from their income when determining food stamp eligibility. The Act raises the food stamp housing deduction cap to \$320 per month over four years and then indexes it to inflation.

Fourth, the Hunger Relief Act authorizes an additional appropriation of \$100 million over five years for commodity purchases and food distribution costs of local food closets for the hungry.

Please write to your senator, urging her to support this important bill.

*Note: The information in this article was drawn from a background paper graciously provided by the National Immigration Law Center and the Food Research Action Center.*

# Iowa Governor Signs Historic Order

Democratic Governor Tom Vilsack of Iowa has signed an executive order banning discrimination in state employment based on "race, creed, color, religion, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, marital status, or physical or mental disability." The move is thought to be the first executive order of its type because it is inclusive of transgendered people.

"This is a great first step toward equality for all gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered Iowans," said Peg Sandeen, spokeswoman for the Iowa Coalition for Human Rights. The Coalition and the Gay and Lesbian Caucus of the Iowa Democratic Party worked with Governor Vilsack to make the executive order a reality.

Kerry Lobel, Executive Director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, joined Sandeen in praising the governor's actions. "The true test of democracy is how it embraces those who look, act, and think differently, not just those who are the same," Lobel said. "Governor Vilsack's visionary move demonstrates what political leadership is all about...moving all of us forward and making communities safer, better places for us to live and work."

For more information, please call Randy Palmer of the Gay and Lesbian Caucus of the Iowa Democratic Party at (515) 244-9202 or e-mail him at [gaylawyer@aol.com](mailto:gaylawyer@aol.com).



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# President Signs Executive Order

President Clinton has signed an executive order that amends the military criminal code to add stiffer penalties for crimes motivated by hatred based on the victim's race, religion, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. Additionally, the order creates a confidentiality privilege in criminal matters for servicemembers' conversations with psychotherapists. These changes are applauded by gay rights activist and members of Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Veterans of America. In the years since the implementation of the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, reports of violent crimes against gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered members of the armed services has been on the rise. Activist hope that these harsher penalties will be a deterrent to such crimes.

In response to President Clinton's order, Edward Clayton, National President of Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Veterans of America said, "We are pleased that the president has finally recognized the increased dangers of being gay and in the military. But we must realize that this change is only to the Pentagon's Manual for Courts-Martial and I see it as having little to do with the current 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' policy. Both provisions of this amendment apply only to criminal prosecutions. They offer no additional protections for servicemembers undergoing administrative discharge—which is the usual means for discharging homosexuals—and it offers absolutely no relief for those who are still in hiding. It is definitely a step in the right direction—but it is just a baby-step on a journey that seems to stretch for hundreds of miles."

Across the country veterans voiced their approval of the president's action, while acknowledging their disappointment that the measure did not go farther.

Have you experienced employment discrimination because of your actual or perceived sexual orientation? If so, you may register a complaint with one of the following Division of Labor Standards Enforcement district offices.

Bakersfield (805-395-2710)	Eureka* (415-557-7878)
Fresno (209-248-8400)	Long Beach (310-590-5044)
Los Angeles (213-897-4037)	Marysville (916-741-4061)
Oakland* (415-557-7878)	Redding* (415-557-7878)
Sacramento (916-323-4920)	Salinas* (415-557-7878)
San Bernardino (909-383-4333)	San Diego (619-637-5500)
San Francisco* (415-557-7878)	San Jose* (415-557-7878)
Santa Ana (714-558-4111)	Santa Barbara (805-963-1438)
Santa Rosa (707-576-2363)	Stockton (209-948-7770)
Van Nuys (818-901-5312)	Ventura (805-654-4538)

\*These cities share an office.

## LGBT Issue

*Continued from page 3*

Education, which will evaluate it and, if appropriate, take action to ensure that the school lives up to its responsibilities.

This process—more pragmatic and accessible than a court proceeding—is also less threatening to schools and will therefore require a great deal of effort, education, and compliance monitoring from local community groups, teachers, students, and the California Department of Education.

The Department of Education will need to:

- Develop a clear, streamlined complaint procedure and publicize it broadly
- Educate local school districts on sexual orientation discrimination and harassment
- Develop strong and effective remedies for schools that don't comply
- Develop curricula, trainings, and other tools for schools in need of assistance with compliance
- Routinely and automatically include LGBT youth in the research and materials it creates

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Delaine Eastin, long a supporter of the bill to protect LGBT students, now bears primary responsibility, in partnership with schools and community groups, in making those protections meaningful.

Wally Straughn, GLBVA's Veterans Affairs Officer, stated, "What the president should do is take a stand to stop discrimination in the military completely. Then by example he would show that being different is not a reason to be harassed or assaulted. As long as the military is discriminating it only encourages its members to do the same." Another veteran, Darryl James, added, "Combined with what just occurred in the European Courts this is a slight step toward progress. Last month's European Court decision, which ruled that Britain's anti-gay policy violates service members rights, is the kind of decision that we need to see here in the U.S."

*The preceding article was provided by the Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Veterans of America, Inc.*



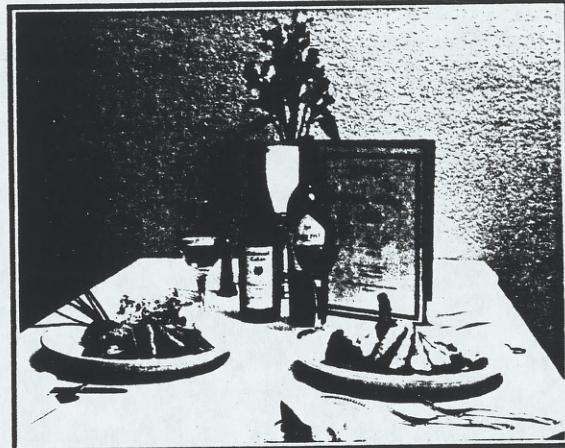
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We are open Friday, Saturday for the winter months, with lunch served 11am-2:30pm and dinner 4:30pm to 10pm. Sundays we feature champagne brunch starting at 11am and dinner from 4:30-8:30pm.



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I hope to see all of you soon ...

*Terry Sidie  
Kerry Holsworth*



# That's All Folks

It's time to give our many volunteers a well deserved rest.

So,

This is our last issue for this year.

We wish you a wonderful holiday season,

And we'll see you in the next century!

*This Holiday Season,  
Give the Gift of Freedom!*

Surely your friends and loved ones have enough ties, wallets, scarfs and purses.

Surely they don't need another bottle of wine or box of candy.

Consider giving the ones you love a gift membership in Lambda Letters. That's a gift they can use again, and again, and again.

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Give a gift membership in Lambda Letters!

Yes, I would like to give a gift membership in the Lambda Letters Project. Please enroll the following person as a member:

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Address - \_\_\_\_\_

City - \_\_\_\_\_ California ZIP - \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose -  \$35 Membership Dues  \$20 Limited Income Membership.

Please accept my request for a waiver of dues.

Name of person making the gift - \_\_\_\_\_